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Christie Administration And United States Army Corps Announce Schedule To Move Forward On Beach And Dune Projects

Thursday, October 17, 2013

Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

Governor Reinforces Commitment To Securing Easements For Projects That Will Protect Lives, Property And Infrastructure

Trenton, NJ – Reinforcing his commitment to a strong and resilient shore, the Christie Administration today jointly announced with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers the schedule for critical Army Corps beach and dune construction projects that will reduce risk to lives, properties and infrastructure by rebuilding 44 miles of New Jersey coastline and providing the state with the most comprehensive and continuous coastal protection system it has ever had.

"Superstorm Sandy proved that beaches and dunes built to Army Corps' design and construction standards did their job – they protected lives and property," said Governor Christie. "These new projects will fill in the critical gaps, providing protection to areas that were vulnerable when Sandy hit."

"Governor Christie and I are grateful to the Army Corps for working closely with the State to move these projects forward on an accelerated schedule," said Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bob Martin. "It is vital to begin these projects as quickly as possible."

When the projects announced today are completed, most of New Jersey's Atlantic Coast communities will have protections that meet Army Corps' standards. These projects complement numerous other Army Corps projects that have already been undertaken to restore beaches damaged by Sandy.

"All of these projects are critical to reducing coastal storm damage risks for those who live and work in coastal New Jersey," said Brigadier General Kent D. Savre, commanding general and division engineer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers North Atlantic Division, which worked closely with the Christie Administration in developing the schedule. "The Army Corps is committed to continue working closely with the state of New Jersey, as well as leveraging all of our organization's capabilities to deliver these projects as expeditiously as possible."

Schedules of project agreements and construction start and completion dates depend on multiple preparatory and regulatory steps, including securing necessary permits and easements, among other things. Through strong collaboration between the State and the Army Corps, DEP is preparing for construction on the following schedule:

Port Monmouth portion of Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay project area

Project agreement: November 2013

Projected construction start: March 2014

Southern Ocean City, Upper Township, and Sea Isle City portions of the Great Egg Harbor Inlet to Townsends Inlet project area

Project agreement: December 2013

Projected construction start: March 2014

Longport and Margate portions of Absecon Island within the Brigantine Inlet to Cape May Inlet project area

Project agreement: January 2014

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Projected construction start: April 2014

Beach Haven, Long Beach Township and Ship Bottom on the Long Beach Island portion of the Little Egg Inlet project area

Project agreement: January 2014

Projected construction start: April 2014

Bay Head, Berkeley, Brick, Lavallette, Mantoloking, Point Pleasant Beach, Toms River, Seaside Heights and Seaside Park within the Manasquan Inlet to Barnegat Inlet project area

Project agreement: March 2014

Projected construction start: June 2014

Allenhurst, Deal, Loch Arbour and the Elberon section of Long Branch within the Sandy Hook to Barnegat Inlet Section I project area

Project agreement: May 2014

Projected construction start: August 2014

The Union Beach section of the Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay project area

Project agreement: October 2014

Projected construction start: February 2015

Projects in these areas were previously designed and congressionally authorized but not constructed due to a need to secure funding, a lack of easements, or both. Congress has appropriated \$1 billion for these and additional flood protection projects for New Jersey as part of the comprehensive Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013. The majority of the projects are being fully funded by the federal government.

The execution dates of the project agreements coincide with the dates that the DEP anticipates securing and being able to provide the Army Corps with easements on all public and private real estate required for construction and ongoing maintenance of the beach and dunes. In order to meet these dates, the easements may be received by DEP through voluntary donation or through a condemnation process which would begin in advance of these dates.

Projects that the Army Corps has already undertaken since Sandy include:

Monmouth County: Asbury Park, Avon, Bradley Beach, Belmar, Keansburg, Long Branch, Manasquan, Monmouth Beach, Neptune, Sea Bright, Sea Girt and Spring Lake.

Ocean County: Brant Beach, Harvey Cedars and Surf City.

Atlantic County: Atlantic City, Brigantine and Ventnor.

Cape May County: Avalon, Cape May City, northern Ocean City, Stone Harbor, and Cape May Point/Lower Cape May Meadows.

Nearly 500 easements are still outstanding in this northern Ocean County area, or about half of the 1,000 easements needed statewide. Governor Christie has taken aggressive action to secure outstanding easements required for all of the projects, signing an Executive Order under the authority of the state's Disaster Control Act that authorizes the state to secure remaining easements, not provided voluntarily, through eminent domain.

"These holdouts should by now realize there is no windfall waiting for them," continued Governor Christie. "After Sandy, there can be no justifiable argument for anyone to avoid doing what is right. Now is the time for all remaining beachfront property owners to step up and do the right thing for their neighbors, for their communities, and, for their own protection."

In July, the New Jersey Supreme Court overturned a lower court ruling that awarded a Harvey Cedars couple \$375,000 for an easement that was taken by eminent domain. Following the Supreme Court ruling, the couple, who had argued the dune would block their ocean view, conveyed an easement to the borough allowing construction of an elevation 22-foot dune – in return for \$1.

Beyond the coastline, the Army Corps is conducting a comprehensive study to evaluate flood-prone regions in New Jersey. The Christie Administration last month announced a collaboration of six New Jersey colleges and universities to develop flood mitigation strategies for areas of the state that were heavily impacted by Superstorm Sandy and may be vulnerable to future flooding. It is expected that the analyses will help inform the Army Corps comprehensive study, among other things.

For information on the university studies, visit: http://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2013/13_0091.htm

For a map of upcoming Army Corps project areas, visit: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/docs/nj-fed-coastal.pdf>

For Sandy project information from the Army Corps of Engineers, visit the New York District's Sandy website at www.nan.usace.army.mil/sandy and the Philadelphia District's website at: <http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/About/HurricaneSandy.aspx>

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